

Remarks

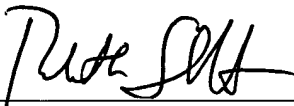
Telephone interviews were conducted between Examiner Reilly and applicants' representative Robert L. Showalter on July 27, 2006. During the interviews, the § 101 and § 112, ¶ 2 rejections set out in the May 19, 2006 Office Action were discussed. During one of the discussions, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the § 101 and § 112, ¶ 2 rejections applied against method claims 2-5 and 7-17. However, he indicated that new prior art rejections may be made against those claims in a subsequent Office Action. Mr. Showalter also noted that applicants plan to incorporate the limitations of claims 3, 5, 23 and 25 into claims 2, 4, 22 and 24, respectively.

With this Amendment, the limitations of claims 3, 5, 23 and 25 have been incorporated into claims 2, 4, 22 and 24, respectively. Since claims 3, 5, 23 and 25 were not rejected upon prior art grounds in the May 19, 2006 Office Action, it is believed that amended claims 2, 4, 22 and 24 now define patentable invention over the applied prior art.

No prior art rejections were made in the May 19, 2006 Office Action against remaining claims 7-17, 27-37 and 42.

Applicants submit that claims 2, 4, 7-17, 22, 24, 27-37 and 42 define patentably over the prior art. Early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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